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DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Operations Support Division

Briefing Branch

FIN-1C

24 October 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR Mr. Cordesman

Re: Your question regarding Israeli responses to recent and projected Syrian moves on the Golan Front, the following information is provided:

-- Israeli reconnaissance flights were conducted over the area of the Golan and south Syria yesterday and on a daily basis since 20 October.

-- No reported increase in IDF alert posture on the Golan Front has yet been noted, but our feeling is that the Israelis could well have instituted selective recalls and increased their alert posture somewhat. Some minor redeployment of forces in the area may have occurred, probably into areas which have recently experienced Syrian incursions.

-- In face of continued posturing by the Syrians, Asad's option #1, no change is expected in current Israeli actions.

-- In face of option #2 (limited military initiative), the IDF is expected to meet the Syrian initiative on an equal footing. This would most likely be characterized by responsive artillery attacks by fire and small-scale, temporary incursions across

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the border. They could also strengthen forces in the area by instituting a limited recall of reserves and demonstrate their concern by conducting exercises in northern Israel. To date, we have seen no evidence of this activity.

-- In face of option #3, or IDF perception of the imminence of such a possibility, Israel could well initiate a preemptive ground or air attack with forces now on active duty.

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MEMORANDUM FOR VADM RECTANUS

SUBJECT: DIAPIAPPR 145-75: Syria: Moves Toward Military Option, Warning Intelligence Appraisal, 24 October 1975.

(S) This is a good job of reporting. Most of the intelligence evidence is provided and all of the data is laid out in logical order. The tone is exceptionally well balanced and objective. It has a good summary and it lays out the major possible contingencies and assigns them a probability. This is precisely the kind of warning that the Community should give when it is not sure of events, but sees various indicators building up.

(S) The appraisal also does something most of the briefings have not. It mentions Lebanon and assigns a good set of probabilities as to Syrian intentions for the day upon which it was written. Its major defect is that it does not warn that Syrian intentions could change radically if events get totally out of control in Lebanon. It does not cover the range of possible contingencies.

(C) The appraisal also fails to consider possible Israeli reactions. I asked for a separate note on these (attached), and there is evidently a good probability that Israel might seriously over-react to limited Syrian initiatives. I have confirmed this with the DIO. Unfortunately, many Alert Memoranda fall into this same trap. They consider only the actions taken by the side or group whose indicators have changed. They fail to consider the probable response. In this case, the problem is particularly striking because Israeli over-reaction might trigger Soviet reactions which...

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(C) The appraisal also lacks a detailed chronology of events and indicators, and picks up more reliable sources while ignoring some less reliable sources. It would be desirable in future appraisals and alert memoranda if such a chronology could be attached and lay out the intelligence evidence in detail in a form separate from inference or analysis. This is particularly important because consumers who read the cable traffic, or who are involved in contingency planning, may have special interest in what may be relatively minor indicators to the Community.

(C) More generally, the appraisal suffers from the same general defect as most "bits and pieces" current intelligence reporting. It does not reference sources of recent reporting that the consumer can consult for more perspective. It does not provide a basis for the consumer to understand how the other sources and bits and pieces he sees relate to the appraisal. And, it becomes obsolete almost within a day of its issue as new indicators come in. These problems characterized the handling of the last Alert Memoranda on the Arab-Israeli crisis (), and were discussed in the NSCIC/WG Meeting of 22 October 1975.

(C) This leads to the following recommendations:

- warning appraisals and alert memoranda should reference other recent reporting or key sources.
- they should be updated (daily) or as required until terminated to show how the evidence and probabilities are changing.
- if the indicators grow more serious, they should be steadily expanded with suitable attachments to summarize the intelligence data needed for crisis management and contingency planning.
- other individual intelligence reports that come in while the alert or warning appraisal is in effect should be referenced in the daily update of the appraisal so no major report is left out of context of some over view of events.

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- a detailed chronology of events and indicators should be provided. The reliability of the source of indicators should be stated, and minor or less reliable indicators should be listed to give a comprehensive picture of the evidence.
- all alert memoranda or warning appraisals should be terminated.

Anthony H. Cordesman
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